THE TITLE OF THIS BOOK IS:-

A) THE SHAR'EE STATUS OF PRESENT – DAY GATHERINGS OF GATHERINGS OF ZIKR AND DUROOD.
B) THE SHAR'EE STATUS OF GATHERINGS OF ZIKR AND DUROOD OF TODAY.

BY: MUFTI, DOCTOR ABDUL WAAHID.
(JAMEAH MADANIYAH, LAHORE)

FOREWORD:

Who can deny the virtues of gatherings of Zikr and Durood, which are mentioned in the blessed Ahaadeeth, but their methods have been strictly controlled and regulated by the Hadith, Sunnah and Deen. When the perimeter of these controls and regulations are breached, then the masses become engrossed in ways and methods which are impermissible and disliked. We see today that those differences which separated the permissible from the impermissible are also being set aside, and the understanding and knowledge of their differences is completely being disregarded. Allaah S.W.T. has been kind to us that he gave us the means and the ability to explain the permissibility and impermissibility of gatherings of Zikr with authentic proof. We have also given the answers to some of the questions which have been raised by some circles of Zikr. It is hoped that all these proofs will be seen with an unbiased attempt to seek the truth. If this Treatise is true and correct then it is from Allaah, and if there are mistakes in it, then it is our earnest appeal that that we be informed of such mistakes.

We earnestly pray to Allaah Taala, that He accept this humble effort from us, which is an effort done only to serve His Deen. May Allaah Taala gift the reward of this effort to our Ustaads, and to all those who helped in the publication of this Treatise. May Allaah S.W.T. reward all of them with the blessings of the two Worlds. Aameen.

Muharramul – Haraam, 1422 A.H.
Doctor, Mufti Abdul Waahid,
Jameah Madaniyah.
Lahore- Pakistaan

THE SHAR'EE STATUS OF THE GATHERINGS OF ZIKR AND DUROOD OF TODAY.

INTRODUCTION:

In the name of Allaah, all praise is for Allaah; we praise Him and seek His assistance. We seek forgiveness, and we believe in Him and put our trust in Him, and we bear witness that Muhammad (S.A.W.) is His slave and messenger. May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him, and upon his family and his companions, all of them.

There are many vast and open discussions about the virtues of gatherings of Zikr to be found in the blessed saying of Rasulullah (S.A.W.), therefore there is no ambiguity and doubt in the regality and excellence of such gatherings. But in the present day gatherings a lot of excess and freedom is to be found in the attitude of the people towards such gatherings. Every type of gathering of Zikr, whether it has been publicized and given publicity, or even if they are done wrongly, all such gatherings are regarded to be noble; and because of some external benefits and minute useful advantages the masses are becoming to accept them as good, rewarding and beneficial. Before people can accept such gatherings as good, beneficial and rewarding is for people to take cognizance of the fact that during the time and era of Rasulullah (S.A.W.) who were even more hungry, desirous and yearning to perform deeds than us, what were the conditions and limitations of such gatherings of Zikr. Whatever conditions and limitations they applied, we to should do the same, and whatever conditions and limitations they outlawed we too should exclude and outlaw them, even though we may externally see many benefits in them.

It used to be the practice of the Noble Companions (R.A) of Rasulullah (S.A.W.), Ridwaanullaah……, that they used to remain

seated after the Fajr and Asr' s salaah and engage in Zikr, and at other times too the Noble Companions (R.A.) were found to be engaged in Zikr. Because the Masjid was of vital significance to them, not only was it a centre of learning, the Masjid was also a place of Administrative, Political activities and for settling legal disputes. Similarly the Zaakireen group of Sahabah too used to occupy one portion of the Masjid and form their groups of Zikr. In this manner on their own without any publicity or invitation a gathering of Zikr came into existence without the people calling out to or inviting one another to form gatherings or Halqas of Zikr. Many people fail to understand this aspect of the lives of the Sahabah, that how was this ever possible or conceivable during the era of the Sahabah (R.A.) a lot of people do not accept this as possible because they have lost respect for the Sahabah, and have stated to compare and equate the Noble Companions to the present generation of Muslims.

Further more, in addition to the Sahabah (R.A) not publicizing and calling for public gatherings for assembles of Zikr, the Sahabah never grouped together to form Jama'at and congregations of Zikr; meaning that collective arrangements be made that people gather and collect in a particular place, at a particular time on a particular day for Zikr. This was unheard of and unthought-of during the time of the Noble Companions. Although the Sahabah (R.A.) did form a group in one section of the Masjidun Nabawi (S.A.W.) to make Zikr, everybody in this group made his own individual Zikr, and not all of them together; even if the words of Zikr were the same or different, never was any arrangement made that all of them together made Zikr in an organized display of words. This they regarded as Bid'at and innovation. It is this unlawful method which we (the author of this Treatise) have named as:

i) Zikr in congregation.
ii) or collective gatherings (assemblies) of Zikr.

In our Treatise that follows, these are the two forms of Zikr which is going to be discussed in detail. We divide these two into five sections.

Section One: The virtues of gatherings of Zikr mentioned in the Ahaadeeth.
Section Two: During the best times of Rasulullah (S.A.W.) and the Sahabah, gatherings of Zikr were not publicized.
Section Three: Gatherings for loud (audible) Zikr is Bid'at.
Section Four: Gathering for soft (inaudible) zikr is Bida'at
Section Five: The rulings about the different forms of gatherings of Zikr of today.

SECTION ONE:

THE VIRTUES OF GATHERINGS OF ZIKR MENTIONED IN THE AHAADEETH.

Hadith No. 1: Narrated by Abu Hurairah and Abu Saeed Al-Khudri (R.A.): Allaah's Messenger (S.A.W.) said, "When a group of people assemble for the remembrance of Allaah, the angels surround them (with their wings), Allaah's mercy envelops them, Sakinah, or Tranquility descends upon them. Allaah makes mention of them before those who are near Him. (Muslim)

Hadith No. 2: Narrated by Abu Hurairah (R.A.): Allaah's Messenger (S.A.W.) said, "Allaah the exalted says, and if he (my slave) remembers me in an assembly, I will remember him in a better assembly (i.e. in the assembly of angels). (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Hadith No. 3: Narrated by Abu Hurairah (R.A.): Allaah's Messenger (S.A.W.) said, "Allaah has teams of angels who go about on the roads seeking those who remember Allaah. When they find some people remembering Allaah they call to one another and say, "Come to what you are looking for here". (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Mullah Ali Qari (R.A.) says: The words of the Hadith, "Those who remember Allaah, means all kinds of Zikr. The special words of Zikr to be found in the Ahaadeeth are used as examples. Moreover the virtues of gatherings for Zikr are corroborated by this Hadith.

(Mirqat, Page 56, vol. 5)

Hadith No. 4: Narrated by Anas (R.A.): Allaah's Messenger (S.A.W.) said, "When you pass the gardens of Paradise, graze to your hearts content." Someone asked, "O messenger of Allaah (S.A.W.) what is meant by the Gardens of Paradise?" Nabi (S.A.W.) said, "Gatherings of performing Zikr." (Ahmad and Tirmidhi)

Hadith No. 5: Narrated by Abu Saeed (R.A.), Muaawiya (R.A.) came upon a gathering of people in the Masjid so he asked, why are you people gathered (sitting) here? They said, "We are gathered (sitting) here to perform the Zikr of Allaah." (For more information of the above, refer to: "Virtues of Zikr" by Hadrat Zakarriyah Kandhalwi (R.A.), Page 42, Hadith No. 9 Translator)

Hadith No. 6: Narrated by Abdur Rahman bin Sahl bin Hanif (R.A), Rasulullah (S.A.W.) was in one of his houses when the verse was revealed upon him:-"And keep yourself bound to the company of those who call upon their Rabb in the morning and evening seeking his countenance. On this revelation Rasulullah (S.A.W.) went out in search of such people; He found a group of people who were engaged in the Remembrance of Allaah. Some of them were with uncombed hair, some covered in dry skin and some covered only in one piece of cloth; on seeing them Rasulullah (S.A.W.) sat down with them and said: "All praise is to Allaah who gave birth to such people in my Ummah in whose company I have been ordered to sit in their company."

In another Hadith, with a little variation, Allaah's messenger (S.A.W.) has reported to have said: "I prefer sitting with a group of those who remain busy Remembering Allaah after the Fajr salaah up to sunrise, to the Noble act of setting free four Arab slaves. Similarly I prefer sitting with a group of those who remain busy in Remembrance of Allaah after the Asr salaah up to sunset, to the Noble act of setting free four Arab slaves."(Virtues of Zikr, Page 71.)

Note: It becomes evident from the above mentioned Ahaadeeth that when a group of people sit down at one place for the Remembrance of Allaah, whether it be in the Masjid or Khanqah; or any place for that matter, and whether they engage themselves in the recitation of Qur'an Kareem, or in the recitation of Tasbeeh, or SubhanAllaah or Alhamduillaah, or in the recitation of Durood Shareef. These sittings will be regarded as a gathering of Zikr, which is a very virtuous and meritorious act. The Noble Companions (R.A.) used to sit in the Masjid after the Fajr and Asr salaahs, and keep themselves busy in Zikr and Tilaawat and during other times as well. Whenever any one of them found it convenient one used to come to the Masjid and engage oneself in learning, teaching or in the Remembrance of Allaah.

SECTION TWO:

THERE WAS NO INVITATION, ANNOUNCEMNTS OR PUBLICITY OR FOR GATHERINGS OF ZIKR DURING THE BEST TIMES.

We have to now see and ascertain that during the period of the Noble Companions (R.A.), for those gatherings and circles of Zikr which were common, were people invited or called to such gatherings, or did they come into existence on their own.

Actually as a matter of fact there is no proof or evidence to be found at all, that such was the case. The Noble Companions (R.A.) hearts were very strongly inclined towards the Aakhirat. They had heard from Rasulullah (S.A.W.) the virtues of gatherings of Zikr, and had also heard the virtues of making Zikr in certain, specific times. There was no necessity or need for them to call and invite people to gather during those times for the performance of Zikr.

Allaamah ibnul-Haaj Maliki (R.A.), mentions in his book Al-Mudkhal, vol. 1, page 75;

“Do you (people) not realize that whatever has been said and written (in books) (whatever information has reached us) about their daily practices of (Zikr, Tilaawat, Tasbihaats and Duaa’s), of the Noble Companions (R.A.) which they had performed after the Fajr and Asr salaahs, was done by them because they spent these two times in the Masjid as if waiting for the Jumma Salaah. Their Zikr etc. during these two times could be heard n the Masjid like the buzzing of Bees.” Today too, we do find some devout servants of Allaah who sit waiting in the Masjid after the Fajr up to the Ishraak salaah, busy engaged in Zikr and Tilaawat. This then makes us fully aware of the extent of the connection the people of the best times had with the Masjid.

Moreover we find the action of Abu Hurairah (R.A.) inviting people in his time to collect and gather in the Masjid for education (teaching and learning), but not for the purpose of Zikr and Remembrance of Allaah.

Again, Allaamah ibnul-Haaj Maliki (R.A.) mention in his book Al-Mudkhal, vol.1, page 82, that:- **Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (R.A.)** went into the Bazaar of Madinah and said to his people, “O people! What has happened to you that the legacy and inheritance of Rasulullah (S.A.W.) is being distributed to his followers in the Masjid and you are busy in the Bazaar (buying and selling), the people thinking that perhaps some items /articles which Rasulullah (S.A.W.) had left behind, if one could obtain such item and article and keep it as a blessed token or souvenir, he would certainly be blessed, so they rushed to the Masjid and saw in the Masjid groups of people. Some of them were engaged in teaching and learning of the Qur’an, some were busy learning and teaching the Hadith, and others were busy teaching and learning the laws of halaal and haraam. They asked, “O , Abu Hurairah! Where is the legacy and inheritance of Rasulullah (S.A.W.) that you were talking about? He replied, “This, what you see in front of your eyes is it.” The Ambiyaa (A.S.) (prophets) do not leave behind dinars and dirhams (goods) but leave behind knowledge as their legacy and heritance.

In addition, these forms of Zikr and daily practices are voluntary and optional acts for which invitation and publicity is not permissible. **Hadrat Moulana Khalil Ahmad Sahaaranpuri (R.A.)** (Muhaajire Madinah) has written some controls/restrictions regarding such actions, and says: - "So one must reflect that the mere essence of Zikr of Maulood is optional and laudable but performance of nafil salaah (optional salaah) is more better and virtuous; a more Noble act of worship; one which brings one more closer to Allaah; and a good act of worship; yet for its performance, invitation and publicity has been regarded as Bid'at. Here too, though the Zikr and gatherings Meelad or Maulood is virtuous, but invitation and publicity for its gatherings is nowhere evident in the actions of the previous pious predecessors; so it will become Bid'at. Off-course invitation and publicity for people to attend gatherings of lectures and academic discourses is a proven and established fact of the previous pious predecessors, because they are obligatory like the performance of the five daily salaah." (Baraaheene – Qaati'ah P.153)

SECTION THREE:

GATHERINGS OF LOUD ZIKR IS BID'AT.

Our implication to collective gatherings/assemblies of Zikr are those types of gatherings where all the people altogether will make the same form of Zikr in the same time, whether they have one to lead them or not.

Allaamah ibnul-Haaj Maliki (R.A.), mentions in his book Al-Mudkhal, vol.1, Page 75; that: - in Hilyatil-Auliyaa etc. it is narrated by Abdul-Baehtari (R.A.), that a man came and informed **Abdullah ibne Mas'ood (R.A.)** that some people sit together in a group after Maghrib salaah. One man from amongst them says/orders. Recite so many times Takbeer; recite so many times Tasbeeh SubhanAllaah; recite so many times Alhamduillah. Abdullah ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) asked, "Do the people then do this"? Yes, said the man. Ibne

Mas'ood (R.A.) told him, "When you see them doing it again, then come and inform me about their gathering. The informant says, "I then came and informed him of the gathering of these people". Abdullah ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) who was wearing a hooded cloak at the time came to these people and sat down. Then when he heard and saw what they were doing, he stood up in anger because he was a man of high temperament and said to these people," I am Abdullah ibne Mas'ood (R.A.), I swear on the name of the one Allaah who has no partner that you have done one of two things :- Either you have invented an extremely dark and evil Bid'at (innovation) ; or either you have surpassed the Noble Companions (R.A.) in knowledge, one of the group said by way of apology, "I swear by Allaah we have done nothing of the two. Amru bin Uthba said, "O Abu Abdur Rahman we seek Allaah's pardon and forgiveness. Ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) then advised them by saying: "hold on firmly onto the practices of the Noble Companions." "I swear on the name of Allaah, if you continue to do actions such as these then you will be far off the right track."

In the Mu'jami-Kabeer of Tabarani it is mentioned that Amru ibne Uthba bin Farqad (R.A.) said: "O ibne Mas'ood, I seek repentance before Allaah and his pardon," then Ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) asked the people to disperse. (Hayatus Sahabah – Vol 3. P247)

Observe that these types of Zikr, the Tasbeeh, the Tahlil and the Tahmeed were all masnoon Zikr's. They are not prohibited from being said in the Masjid. During the era of the Noble Companions (R.A.) gatherings for performance of such Zikr's were formed, and these Zikr's were recited by them without calling people to take part in them, as we have already mentioned above. If only loud Zikr was disallowed then Abdullah ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) would have stopped that as well, **but what he stopped and disallowed was the collective and combined method of performance of the Zikr.** The strong and clear proof of this is given by Tabarani is that: He ordered the people to disperse (and leave the Masjid).

Note: in the above incident the mode of Zikr acted upon by the group of people was not in conformity with the practice of the Noble Companions (R.A.) that is why it was stopped Ibne Mas'ood (R.A.). (Translator)

SECTION 4

GATHERING FOR SOFT (INAUDIBLE) ZIKR IS BIDA'AT

Here is another example which strongly condemns any action which is not done according to the way of the Noble Companions (R.A.).

The incident is mentioned in Sunan of Darimi by the narrator that we were a group who used to come and wait outside the door of Abdullah ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) before the Fajr salaah. When he came out then all of us together used to proceed to the Masjid to read the Fajr salaah. One day Abu Musa Ash'ari (R.A.) came to us and asked, "Has Abu Abdur-Rahman ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) come out yet?" We said, "No." So he sat down with us. When Ibne Mas'ood came out of his door, we all stood up facing him, and Abu Musa Ash'ari (R.A.) said, "O Abu Abdur-Rahman! I saw just now something very bad happening in the Masjid, which I very much disliked, and praise be to Allaah my intention is good." "What have you seen?" asked Ibne Mas'ood (R.A.). Abu Musa Ash'ari (R.A.) said, "If you live a little longer you will see that thing with your own eyes." "I have seen various different groups of people grouped together waiting to perform the Fajr salaah. In the mean time these people are making Zikr in the following manner. They have in their hand small stones, and a leader from each group says loudly, "Read a hundred times Takbeer and the people do so." Then he calls out loudly, "Read a hundred times Laa ilaaha-Illallaah," and the people do so, then for a third time he calls out loudly, "Read SubhanAllaah a hundred times", and the people do so. On hearing this Ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) asked, "So what did you tell them?" Abu Musa Ash'ari (R.A.) replied, "I told them nothing, because I wanted to consult you first." To this Ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) replied, "Why did you not tell them to count

their sins on those stones; and give them the assurance that if they do that then Allaah would not take their good deeds away. The narrator then says, we proceeded and then entered the Masjid, where Ibne Mas'ood then stood by one of these groups. Then he enquired of them, "What do I see you people doing?" They replied, "We are counting the numbers of the amount of Takbir, Tahlil and Tasbeeh we are reciting. Ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) said, "Count your sins on these stones and I guarantee you that none of your past good deeds will be taken away." "O Ummah of Muhammad (S.A.W.), woe to you. How quickly decline and degeneration has come upon you. Many of the Noble Companions of your Nabi (S.A.W.) are still alive amongst you; the blessed clothes of the Nabi (S.A.W) have not yet become ragged; his cups and utensils have yet not broken; I swear in the name of Allaah in whose hands is my life, either you are following a Deen (religion) more better than the Deen of Muhammad (S.A.W.) , or you have opened up a door of great error and sin" The people replied, "O Abu Abdur-Rahman we have intended only to do good." Ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) replied, "**There are many people whose intention is to do good, but they have not reached that goodness, because they deviated from the path of the Noble Companions (R.A.).** Rasulullah (S.A.W.) had informed us; many people would read the Qur'an but the Qur'an would not go down their throats, (i.e. they would not practice upon it). "I swear on Allaah's name, I do not know whether many of them are from amongst you or not?" Then Ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) turned away from them (and took his position in the Masjid). Umar bin Muslimah (R.A.) says, "Many people of these groups later joined up with the Kwaarij (The Revolters) and fought against us in the Battle of Nahriwan. (Sunan Duarmi – Vol 1 P60)

The above incident is not the same as the one told by 'Hilyatil-Auliyaa' for that incident occurred after the Maghrib salaah, and this one of Sunani Darimi took place before the Fajr salaah. **But the common factor in both these incidents is that the form and mode of Zikr done by both groups were against the norm and practice of the Noble Companions (R.A.)."**

COLLABORATION BY THE WORDS OF HADHRAT MOULANA HUSSAIN AHMAD MADHANI (A.R)

Once a Mureed (disciple), of **Shaikul Islaam, Hadrat Moulana Hussain Ahmad Madani (R.A.)** questioned the above incident of Sunani Darimi. The Noble Shaikh gave the following reply the gist of which is: - That Ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) did not stop the people for grouping together to make Zikr or because such groupings and gatherings of Zikr were banned by Rasulullah (S.A.W.) and the Noble Companions (R.A.). This was not the case for such gatherings are laudable and approved, but Ibne Mas'ood (R.A.) saw something happening in these groups which did not happen in the Noble period, and that could only be as we have already mentioned, that their form and mode of Zikr was against the norm and practice of the Noble Companions (R.A.). They were making something necessary, which was not necessary, which is object able and this special method is reject able on which prohibition comes. That is why Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood (R.A) ordered them to disperse.

COLLABORATION FROM THE FATAWA OF MOULANA ABDUS SATTAAR.

The Fatwa of **Moulana Abdus-Sattaar** Madda Zillahil in Khairul-Fataawa, page no. 708, volume 2, further more gives support to what we have just said; The Honorable Mufti says in his Fatwa: - Hadrat Abdullah ibne Mas'ood (R.A.)'S rejection was on the basis of some peculiar outward form or style, and not on the basis of the collective gathering of people for Zikr. One form and style of collective gathering is intentionally raise their voices and utter the same words of Zikr. Another form and style of people making loud Zikr together is for one to call out and instruct in a loud voice for the people to make Zikr of the same word and they obey; like how a teacher in class teaches his pupils to repeat after him words and numbers. Both the above forms of Zikr are questionable and doubtful. A third form and style of people grouping and collecting for Zikr is for the people

to get together on their own (without being told) in one place and one time, and everybody makes his own Zikr without paying attention or listening to the Zikr of the others. In appearance and likeness because of the singleness of time and place this is also a collective gathering of Zikr; but in reality and purpose this form and style of Zikr is individual Zikr which is acceptable. So it is possible that Abdullah ibne Mas'ood (R.A.)'s rejection and denial of these people was on the basis of the first two forms and style of Zikr.

(Khairul-Fataawa, p. 708)

SECTION 5

COLLECTIVE GATHERINGS OF ZIKR IS BID'AT.

All collective gatherings of loud Zikr in any form is Bid'at. Allaamah ibnul-Haaj Maliki (R.A.), mentions the following in his Al-Mudkhal, vol. 1, page 93. During this era it is necessary for the Aalim/Ulama'a, in fact it is obligatory upon him (upon them) that he gives cognizance to the customs which are in vogue today, or which people in the past have been following, because some or many of them came into vogue through ignorance, negligence and mistake, but the Aalim/Ulama'a must have his sight on the first era and period of the Muslims. If any such Aalim/ Ulama'a have adopted the custom of the past because of some benefit and advantage suited to that time then he must explain to the people in full as to why and for what purpose he has adopted such a custom, and also at the same time acknowledge that the custom he has adopted is a Bid'at. This is obligatory upon him.

Sayyid Abu Muhammad Mirjani (R.A.) used to practice these forms and methods of Zikr and Waseefas in the gatherings of his Mureeds (or in a gathering with his Mureeds) after the Asr and Fajr salaahs**,** and this practice remained with him until his death, but he used to tell his Mureeds/disciples that this form and method of Zikr was Bid'at, and he has only adopted them for a specific need, and the reason /need is that the spirit and resolutions of the people have become so weak that there are very few Sufis who remain engaged in

Zikr and Tilaawat of Qur'an after the performance of Fajr and Asr salaahs.
The General condition of the people is that they sleep away after the Fajr salaah, and spend the time after Asr salaah in frivolous and pointless talks, discussions and activities with only be done by them if they are not involved in other things such as back biting, gossip, Slander and Scandal Mongering. When Abu Muhammad Mirjani (R.A.) saw the people engaged in these types of illegal and unlawful pursuits, so in order to remove them from such unlawful pursuits he engaged such people in the lesser degree of Haraam which is Makrooh and undesirable. For the commission and perpetration of the makrooh acts is better/Afzal than the commission and perpetration of haraam and unlawful acts. In fact it is obligatory to do so. In the same way the commission and perpetration of makrooh acts is necessary for the protection and preservation of Sunnah acts.

Therefore it is necessary for the Aalim or Shaikh who invites and collects the people to take part collectively in gatherings of loud Zikr, to inform the people that these methods are not Sunnah, and they have been adopted for a specific need and purpose. Because the people have not been told this, they have made the wrong judgment into believing that such gatherings of loud Zikr are the Sunnah practice of the pious Sahabah (R.A.), and the pious Mashaaikh and Ulama'a of the past. **People have the tendency to believe that whatever their pious predecessors did was always right. They never went against the Sunnah, and always adhered very strongly to the Sunnah and detested all kinds of Bid'at.** It has been even said to the extent by people, that whoever does not accept the mistake of his Mentor as correct will never benefit from his Shaikh and Teacher; that is why people regard every action and saying of their Shaikhs to be the command of Allaah and the Sunnah of Rasulullah (S.A.W.).

Ponder and reflect for a moment here, as to how Ibnul-Haaj Maliki (R.A.) without any hesitation or denial over the saying of Abu Muhammad Mirjani (R.A.) says that collective crowd's gatherings of

loud Zikr and Waseefas are Bid’at and undesirable. We wish essentially to put forward three advices on the above.
Warning No. 1: - When Sunnah and Bid’at come face to face on opposite sides, Then Sunnah will mean an action for which there is some proof in the Deen; and Bid’at will mean that action for which there is no proof in Deen. It must be understood that when Sunnah is spoken of against Bid’at, then it means a thing or act for which there is some proof in the Shari’ah /Deen.

Hadrat Moulana Khalil Ahmad Sahaaranpuri (R.A.), mentions in his famous book Baraaheene-Qaati’ah, page 32 … But that Sunnah only means that thing or action which was found to be present during the three guided periods (periods of the Sahabah, Taabe’een, Taeb’e-Taabe’een) and that thing or action which was not present in the Shari’ah /Deen at that time is Bid’at. Now listen and understand that the meaning of “Being present in the Deen” and in the terminology of the principles of Fiqh (jurisprudence) is meant to be that thing or action which can not be known but by the teaching and instruction of the legislator of the Shari’ah /Deen. Sentiments and opinion has no access or intrusion into its legislation, but its legislation is based only on the information and teaching of the legislator; whether that information and teaching is direct /open and specified, or it is by gesture /sign or proof /evidence. Thus when the existence and legislation of this thing has become permissible through any of the above type of information and teaching, then that thing has become part of the Shari’ah /Deen, although this class has not become apparent yet. And it must also be kept in mind that the proof and verification of any command can only come about through the Qur’an and Sunnah, and (Qiyaas) Analogy is the mark /display /appearance a command of the affirmation or proof of a command, but whatever command of the Shari’ah is proven by analogy, such a command is regarded as proven /affirmed by the Qur’an and Sunnah.

Furthermore the Moulana says: - “And anything that has no proof of its permissibility, even though that thing existed during the three

Righteous Periods in any outward form, all of it is misleading Bid'at." (Baraaheene-Qaati'ah, page 32)

Now, when it has become clear that collective gatherings of Zikr in any form is in fact Bid'at and undesirable (makrooh), and it has no proof and basis in the Shari'ah /Deen. In fact there is decisive proof of its new permissibility in the Shari'ah, therefore those people who are inclined to think that they are not doing these collective gatherings of loud Zikr as Fard, waajib or Sunnah can not deny or dispel the fact that they are certainly doing these gatherings, thinking them to be mustahab, and permissible; and mustahab and permissible actions / things are only those things / actions in Shari'ah for which there is a Shar'ee / religious proof and basis. Very few people can be counted as doing the right thing otherwise as Allaamah ibnul-Haaj Maliki (R.A.) has clarified that the majority of ordinary people strongly believe such gatherings of loud Zikr as Sunnah, meant to be the Sunnah of Rasulullah (S.A.W.) or the practice of the Noble Companions (R.A.).

This is such an enormous corruption / rot that a thing or action which is makrooh and Bid'at is believed to be a Sunnah. Whereas it becomes obligatory upon the people to abandon a permissible or optional Sunnah act or thing which becomes a fixed / firm belief of the people. When this is so then it would become to a greater extent more obligatory for people to abandon a makrooh and Bid'at act or things which have become a firm believe of the people.

Hadrat Hakimul-Ummat, Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (R.A.) explains the following conditions regarding permissible and mustahab actions: - If any corruption or evil enters into an obligatory established command /order of the Shari'ah, then such corruption and evil is rectified and corrected; but in a permissible and mustahab command /order, if rectification and correction is difficult, then the actual permissible and mustahab action /command will be abandoned. This will even apply to optional Sunnah acts, when there is strong possibility and likelihood of evil and corruption entering

into them, then such optional Sunnahs too will be abandoned more so. All these rules have been clearly written and explained in books of Fiqh which contain the principle rules and laws of the Shari'ah. Perhaps a doubt may arise that only those people who go to the extreme should be stopped from such actions, but those people who are careful and their believes are correct, why should such people be stopped from such actions. Then the answer to this is inevitable, then it also becomes obligatory on one to save oneself from a harm which is inevitable, then it also becomes obligatory on one to save oneself from a harm which will be forthcoming. In all likelihood a man may have done an action with great care and caution, but those who will see him doing such action will consider his action as proof, and start doing this action haphazardly and carelessly, then it is clear that evil and corruption is sure to follow.

I wish to explain here an example to support the claim we have made above: - It is Sunnah to make **sajda of Shukar** according to the Hadith on hearing the news of having received a new or fresh bounty from Allaah, but our Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.) has termed this sajda of Shukar as makrooh. Why? The reason given in the books of Fiqh as given by Allaamah Shaami (R.A.) is only one, and that is, that the common masses may not regard is as a Sunnah to be practiced constantly. Now because of the possibility of this wrong belief of the common masses this act will become makrooh for the chosen and selected people as well. Although it is permissibility has been sanctioned in the Shari'ah with clear proof, and has been accepted as a Sunnah, but it is an optional Sunnah and not a Sunnah to be practiced constantly. Because of the difference in belief the action has been termed as makrooh and undesirable.

Another example is the example of the **two rak'ats of nafil salaah read between the Adhan and Iqaamat of Maghrib.** Its performance has been established by the Hadith, but Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.) regards it as Makrooh. Its undesirability is also based on the same belief that an optional may become consistent Sunnah practice. Its dislike has also been mentioned in the Hadith itself, for

in the same Hadith in which the performance of this nafil salaah is mentioned, Rasulullah (S.A.W.) also mentions in the end; "Whosoever wants to read it can read it." The narrator of the Hadith then mentions as to why Rasulullah (S.A.W.) mentioned the words "Leman shaa'a" only because of the undesirability of this salaah becoming a consistent Sunnah with the people.

A third example is the example of Salaatul-Janaaza, to **read Suratul Faatiha in Salaatul-Janaaza** is established from the Ahaadeeth. Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.) disallows it. The reason here is that the Salaatul-Janaaza in actual fact is a Duaa, and Nabi (S.A.W.) read Suratul Faatiha in Janazah salaah in the form of Tilaawat, then it will become makrooh. (Bad). The only thing that separates the two is that if anything is recited as a duaa, and someone reads that something in the form of Tilaawat then Kabahat (badness) comes into that thing. So not only has one person been stopped from reading Surah Faatiha in Janazah salaah, but its reading has been totally banned for all Hanafis so that this habit does not spread.

There are many more such examples in Fiqh. In all of them the fact becomes clear as the day becomes clear by the sun, that just as it becomes important for one to safeguard his own Deen, Imaan and Beliefs. It becomes important upon a man to safeguard the Deen, Imaan and beliefs of the common masses as well. It is possible that some careful and learned people may practice upon such examples, but the common masses who are the followers and adherents of such people, are totally ignorant of the wrongs of such practices; nor are they careful and heedful in their performance; nor do they protect themselves from the harms that can spread by the performance of such actions; nor do they know the difference between their actions and those of those of their elders. They only want to see that because some of their elders are doing them, they too can do so in any way they want. (Manwaazi-Meelaadun-Nabi, Pages 243 \ 244)

This whole discourse of Hadrat Hakimul-Ummat (R.A.) only explains in detail the harms of permissible and mustahab actions; and

says nothing about the evils of makrooh and Bid'at which are widespread and far-reaching. Shaikh Abu Muhammad Mirjani (R.A.) went to the extent that he boldly instructed his disciples that we are openly including in an act which is makrooh and Bid'at, at a time when his Mureeds /disciples did not have the care-free and negligent and corrupt beliefs like the people of today. Today there are many such Mashaaikh who do not have the wisdom insight and sound judgment to think and know that the action which they have adopted, what is the Shar'ee /religious /legal status of such action; when they themselves are not aware of its status, then how, why and when would they inform their adherents of its status; or have the courage to boldly state to their adherents, that these actions and programs are actually Bid'at but we have only adopted them temporarily for a specific reason. Though the belief of Shaikh Abu Muhammad Mirjani (R.A.) is in itself weak and lame, as we will explain in the following warning.

Warning No. 2: THE RULE OF CONDUCT OF SOME ELDERS WHO BELIEVE THAT IS PERMISSIBLE TO ADOPT MAKROOH ACTIONS IN ORDER TO SAVE PEOPLE FROM THE HARAAM ACTIONS OR FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF A HIGHER GOAL.

Although some Elders regard such a way and conduct as permissible with certain conditions, as Allaamah ibnul-Haaj Maliki (R.A.) has mentioned citing the example of Shaikh Abu Muhammad Mirjani (R.A.) , but in the path of spiritual link and succession of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed (R.A.) and the Elders of Deoband (R.A.), view and judgment is different.

Hadrat Hakimul-Ummat Moulana Thanvi (R.A.) in his correspondence once wrote to Hadrat Moulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (R.A.) who was his senior at the time: - "And the thought comes to mind that with the commission of a makrooh act if the Fard and waajib acts of other Muslims are protected then there is hope with Allaah that Allaah will forgive such an act, ----- at any rate in

my opinion these actions are less then preferable, but for the affairs of Deen there is latitude for them-----."

Hadrat Moulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (R.A.)'s reply: - "In actual fact, a good action which is obtained through an unlegislated action itself becomes unlawful"

It is on this basis that in the Khanqahs (religious /spiritual centers) of the Elders of Deoband at Gangoh, Thaana-Bavanand Raipur that no gatherings of collective Zikr ever took place; nor was a makrooh and Bid'at adopted for a temporary short need or experience; and the Maslak (way of conduct) of our Elders is the most safe and precautionary one, on which experience and observation is sufficient proof. Besides that in it there is absolute practice and adherence to the Sunnah and total avoidance of Bid'at.

ONE DOUBT (PROBLEM) AND ITS SOLUTION

From all the above warnings, the full and comprehensive answer is also given to the doubts and proofs of some people who claimed that collective gatherings of Zikr and recitation of Durood Shareef upon Nabi (S.A.W) used to take place in the sittings and gatherings of some Elders. We do not entertain any bad thoughts about these Elders /Mashaaikh, but with the proof and evidence before us, and in the light of the way and conduct of Hadrat Sayyid Ahmed Shaheed (R.A.) and the Elders of Deoband, we think and regard their action as intensely damaged and weak.

SECOND DOUBT AND ITS SOLUTION

Some people are of the opinion that in view of the following Ahaadeeth collective gatherings of Zikr out of the Masjid is permissible: -

Hadith No. 1: Shaddard bin Aus (R.A.) narrates that we were in the company of the Messenger (S.A.W.) when he said to us, "Lift /raise your hands and say Laa ilaaha illallaah" and we did so. Then the Messenger (S.A.W.) said; (speaking to Allaah), "O Allaah! You sent me with this Kalimah and ordered me to act upon it, and in return you promised me Jannah. Indeed you do not turn away from Your promise. Then the Messenger (S.A.W.) said to us: O people! Receive the glad tidings that Allaah has forgiven all of you."

(Al-Haavi Lil Fataawa vol. 1)

We say that to use the above Hadith as proof for performance of loud Zikr in a gathering is not correct as the Messenger (S.A.W.) did not ask the people to raise up their hands and recite the Kalimah as a form of Zikr; but he did so that the people may give loudly the Shahada and Testimony of their believe in the Kalimah. In this way he made them refresh their Imaan and Faith in the Kalimah and then gave them the glad tidings of Jannah for the fresh renewal of their Faith.

Hadith No. 2: Imam Ahmad reports on the authority of Thaabit (R.A.) who narrates that once Hadrat Salman (R.A.) was sitting with a group of people who were engaged in the Zikr of Allaah. The Messenger (S.A.W.) came upon this group and they became quite /silent. The Messenger (S.A.W.) asked: "What were you people doing /saying /reading? They replied, "We were busy making the Zikr of Allaah." The Messenger (S.A.W.) said to them, "I saw Allaah's mercy descending upon you people, so I decided to join you." Then the Messenger (S.A.W.) praised and glorified Allaah by saying: "All praise is for Allaah who has made amongst my followers such with whom I have been ordered to be with."

Nowhere in the above Hadith are we told that these group of people were ordered or invited to collect collectively for the performance of loud Zikr; nor is there any proof that the members of this group were making Zikr altogether of the same word or sentence. When these two above objections are absent or missing in any type of Zikr

gathering then such gatherings of Zikr are permissible and not objectionable at all. Thus this Hadith too can not be cited as proof for the permissibility of gatherings of loud Zikr.
We present the verbatim translation Photostat copy of a Fatwa (religious ruling) of Hadrat Moulana Mufti Sayyid Abdus-Shakeer Tirmidhi (A.R) verbatim which has reached us via one link.

According to the thinking of this unworthy slave; the gatherings of Zikr initiated by the great Mashaaikh were initiated as a form of remedy and cure, and these gatherings of Zikr were a form of Spiritual training and upbringing. That's why they existed with some and did not exist with others, because the methods of Spiritual training and upbringing were not the same everywhere, but each Shaikh had his own methods of cure and treatment. Mashaaikh who do so as a cure and remedy find such methods are not practical and useful. In other places such methods are not to be done by the people on their own.

These practices are the practices of the Mashaaikh, and not taken to be the Sunnah. (Of the Messenger (S.A.W.)

To enact and authorize collective gatherings of loud Zikr by invitation and publicity as part of the Sunnah, is makrooh and Allaah knows best. (Fatwa given on Safar 22nd, 1415 A.H.)

We would like to further elucidate matters: -

a) In the first place the Most Honorable Mufti (A.R.) has also rejected the Zikr gatherings of the Mashaaikh to be masnoon, which means that according to the regulations mentioned above, that there is no sanction or proof of its permissibility in the Shari'ah at all; or the least that could be said about them is that they are not in any way copied or mirrored from the action of Rasulullah (S.A.W.) and from the Sahabah (R.A.). It becomes therefore very clear that the gatherings of Zikr mentioned in the Ahaadeeth were different from the practices of the Mashaaikh,

and the difference comes from the fact that during the period of the Noble Sahabah (R.A.) there were no congregational ceremonies of Zikr; and whoever did so were immediately stopped and censored. (Reprimanded and stopped).

b) Secondly, the Honorable Mufti Saheb (A.R) has also regarded the Ta-daa'ee (invitation and call) of such gatherings as makrooh; and this is exactly what we are trying to prove and establish.

c) The third point we would like to clarify about the above Fatwa of the Honorable Mufti Saheb (A.R.) is that he has not stressed upon to explain the nature of the Zikr gatherings and practices of the Mashaaikh. We would like to throw the following more light on them:-

Hadrat Moulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (R.A.) writes in one of his letters to Hadrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (R.A.);

"Think carefully that the restrictions, limitation and specifications attached to the practices of the Mashaaikh are not Bid'at; they are methods used for the attainment and acquisition of forming a link /relationship with Allaah, and turning one's attention and direction towards Allaah are things which are commissioned by Allaah. During the Golden period of the Noble Companions (R.A.) the mere performance of fasting, salaah, tilaawat of Qur'an and Zikr mentioned in the Ahaadeeth were sufficient to obtain this type of link and relationship, and attentions with Allaah. Though these methods were permissible in those days, they were not needed. When a time came when the relationship of the people with Allaah and attention and thought of Allaah took a turn, and the nature, character and temperament of the people completely changed from the days of goodness, it became very difficult for the Ulama'a and Mashaaikh to turn the people attention and direction towards Allaah and form a relationship with him; therefore the doctors and physicians of the heart (the Mashaaikh) in order to cure the people from this sickness, added restrictions, limitations and specification to these practices of

Zikr; sometimes even increasing or decreasing its volume; as if the restrictions, limitations and specification became the basis and groundwork of obtaining such means.

Here Hadrat Moulana Gangohi (R.A.) has very clearly stressed the limitations and restrictions attached to the Zikr practices and activities of the Mashaaikh are not Bid'at but are actually permissible. In other words we can clearly say that the Mashaaikh will only adopt for themselves such practices and activities which are not Bid'at at all but are permissible; therefore when we have learnt that collective gatherings of Zikr is Bid'at, and not permissible, so the Mashaaikh who will make such gatherings of Zikr a routine and daily practice of their activities, but will also consider them to be Bid'at.

Even to use such methods as treatment will not be permissible.

Off course as a positive step if the Mashaaikh adopt the following treatment method: - That he calls some of his Mureeds /disciples who need to be treated and diagnosed into the Khanqah, or asks them to seclude themselves in one portion of the Masjid; and prescribes for each one of them a method of Zikr and its application, and each one of them without forming a group and circle acts upon the method and prescription shown to him. In this way the people will be gathered and the treatment will be effected, such a gathering will also not be regarded as Bid'at, but will resemble a gathering of Zikr which was in operation during the time of the Noble Companions (R.A.).

Then if we accept also the word of those who say that it is permissible to commit a makrooh act in times of need, then it must be understood that the commission of such a makrooh act must be according to the need and not more. Therefore the Mashaaikh will first have to ascertain and identify as to who among the disciples is in need of collective gathering of Zikr, and who is not in need. Then he will have to ascertain, about those who are in need of Therapy through gatherings of Zikr, how many people are required to join such collective gatherings. One person, or two or three persons,

therefore the gathering of Zikr should only be formed with the amount required and not more. **To allow invite and include everybody to such a gathering will not be allowed and permissible in the eyes of these Mashaaikh at all.**

The Conclusion of all the Above Sections:

Are the following points:

Ta-daa'ee;

1) Invitation and call for gatherings of Zikr is not allowed but makrooh.

2) Collective gatherings of Zikr, when members of such gatherings make the arrangement that all of them will make the same Zikr at the same time; then whether this gathering is a gathering of loud Zikr or silent Zikr will be Bid'at and Makrooh; whether it takes place inside the Masjid or outside the Masjid.

3) For the purpose of Teaching and instruction; gatherings of collective Zikr can be formed and initiated according to the extent of the need; but to include them into the practices and activities of the Mashaaikh is not correct, because only those things can be included into the practices and activities of the Mashaaikh which are permissible and not Bid'at.

4) Those gathering of Zikr which are free from Ta-daa'ee (invitation) and call; and in which arrangement **have not been** made for the performance of the same Zikr; then if the Zikr of each individual is separate or coincidently the same; such gatherings of Zikr are allowed. The Ahaadeeth sanction such gatherings. The shape and the form of the collective gatherings of Zikr of the Noble Companions (R.A.) conformed to these Ahaadeeth. Maximum spiritual benefits can be obtained from such gathering without falling into any kind of evil and Bid'at.

5) For the removal of calamities, sickness and other types of natural disasters like Famines and Droughts etc. to form and assemble people for collective Zikr; for the recitation of the Qur'an; Khatme Khajaghaan; Khatam of Bukhari Shareef etc. is allowed and permissible, for these types of gatherings **are not done to obtain sawaab and reward, but they are done to alleviate and lesson the hardships and difficulties of the whole creation.** But to make such gatherings a regular habit and must for the people and promote such will not be allowed.

CHAPTER 5:

THE LAW REGARDING THE PRESENT DAY COLLECTIVE GATHERINGS OF ZIKR:

1) To gather people for the purpose of reciting the Qur'an as a means of duaa /supplication.

It is mentioned on page 209 of Imdaadul-Muftiyeen: - A man asked Hadrat Hasan Basri (R.A.) the following, he said, "O Abu Saeed! What is your opinion of such gatherings of ours, who belong to the group of Ahlus-Sunnah wal Jama'at, and who do not reproach and abuse (those before us), gather today in one home, and the next day at another person's home, and so forth, to read the Qur'an and thereafter collectively make duaa for all Muslims?" The Narrator of this incident says that Hadrat Hasan Basri (R.A.) very strongly condemned him and told him to stop doing this. These types of confrontations have been linked to Hadrat ibne Abbas and Hadrat Talhah (R.A.). (Imdaadul-Muftiyeen, Page 209)

2) Gatherings of Durood Shareef:

These gatherings too if are done through Ta-daa'ee (invitation) and call will be Bid'at and Makrooh. A person by the name of Abdur-Rashid Pani Pati sent the following letter seeking legal advice from **Hadrat Moulana Yusuf Ludhanvi (R.A.)**: - I put in writing to you

that Hadrat Aqdas------ Saheb Madda-Zillahu (here the author of this Book has left the name of Hadrat Aqdas out as a result of respect) who is the authorized Khalifa of Hadrat Moulana Zakarriyah Saheb (R.A.) has given the following instructions to the people: - These times are times of great trials and tribulations. The practices of the Pious Elders has always been, that whenever difficulties and trails have raised their head, then they made duaa through the Waseela /medium of Rasulullah (S.A.W.) and increase recitation of duroods in abundance on him. This is the reason (for this reason) specifically that books like Dalaailul-Khairaat, and Hisne-Haseen, and the Qaseedah Burdah were compiled and written; so Hadrat Aqdas has requested the people to increase recitation of Durood abundantly; and form groups /assemblies in the homes and Masjids for recitation of Durood in order to remove and withdraw the anger and displeasure of Allaah. For this reason we have started a gathering in our Masjid in Shukar for the recitation of Durood Shareef. We have fixed the day of Jumma for this gathering so that it would be easy for all to gather. In this gathering all the people read Durood on the pits of dates (date-stones); then a collective duaa is made. The benefit of this gathering is that even the Bid'ati Bareilvi group have also joined us, and their believes have also become correct. Then we started a same type of gathering in another Masjid in the area, after Esha salaah on Mondays; it is our firm belief and admission that our Elders will not order us to do anything that is Bid'at. Because of such gatherings our friends and companions have read Durood Shareef many, many thousands of times." (End of Letter)

Here follows the reply of Hadrat Moulana Yusuf Ludhanvi (R.A.). (The Moulana replied): - "Our reply to your letter is that the basis and foundation laid here is for something else. The basis and foundation laid here is: - Making duaa through the Waseela of Nabi (S.A.W.) and recital of abundant Durood upon him; and the construction erected on this foundation is for people to hold collective gatherings in homes and Masjids for recitation of Durood; whereas for making duaa through the Waseela of Nabi (S.A.W.) and recitation of abundant Durood is not dependent and subject to

collective gatherings of people. This can be done at anytime, and at any place by the people individually, and independency, (it does not have to be done like you are doing it). In this way Hadrat Aqdas has started a chain and series of collective gatherings of Durood Shareef, which even brings people of correct beliefs very much closer to Bid'at and people of Bid'at. People should be on guard and be careful of such things.

3) Some people have adopted the following method for reciting **Durood Shareef; on the day of Jumma after the Salaam of Fard salaah of Asr,** everybody including the Imam, or the Majority or some of the Muqtadees, with the Tasbihaats that are read after the Fard salaah, read 80 times the following Durood and then make a collective duaa.

The Durood is: االلهم صل علی محمد النبی الأمی وعلی اله و سلم تسليما

This practice should also be abandoned under compulsion because in it is addition and extension to the Deen. The Zikr's and utterances which the Shari'ah has stipulated for reading after the fard salaahs, recitation of this Durood Shareef is not included among them. Books of Fiqh and Jurisprudence bear testimony to this. The recitation of this Durood has been recommended in the Ahaadeeth, to be read after the duaa by the people individually and separately. To make it part of the Salaah and to make it collectively in congregation, which people have done is a corrupt and evil Bid'at.

4) **To form gatherings for the recitation of the Qur'an on the launching and inauguration of a new home or shop.**

Because of the evils mentioned above, that is; for people to gather for collective gatherings of Zikr through invitation and call, and also because such gatherings for inauguration of homes, shops and businesses were not done during the Golden period of Sahabah (R.A.), such gatherings too are not correct. Without people gathering, if Qur'an is recited for the sake of Barakaah will surely be beneficial.

5) In the Masjids of some places, on the Day of Jumma, after the Azaan of Jumma, people congregate and read Surah Kahf in the following manner, that one person from the group reads one ruku loudly for the others listen, and then another person reads one ruku loudly and the others listen, until the whole Surah Kahf is read in this manner. This practice also interferes with the salaah and practices of the other musallis. This type of practice too is wrong and un-desirable. If everyone reads his Surah Kahf and other practices individually and in such a manner that it does not interfere with other peoples Zikr and practices, then there is no harm in doing so. Allaamah ibnul-Haaj Maliki (R.A.) in his Mudkhal mentions about this practice of the people: - People should be stopped from reading Surah Kahf loudly in a group, because it is a Bid'at.

(Mudkhal, vol. 2, page 81)
(Fataawa Rahimiyyah, vol.1, page 247)

6) Some Elders have initiated the practice of gathering their Mureeds for a gathering in which one person recites Durood and Salaawat loudly and the others listen. This practice too is wrong because such gatherings can only be formed for the listening of the Tilaawat and Recitation of the Qur'an, and not for recitation and listening of other types of Zikr and for singing Allaah's praises.

Forming Gatherings for Reciting Zikr for Removing Calamities and Disasters:

Hadrat Moulana Mufti Mahmoodul-Hasan Gangohi (R.A.) writes about such gatherings: - The Khatam Shareef which is made for the removal of calamities and disasters is not as a form of Ibaadat but done as a form of remedy and cure; whether the Khatam is of the verses of the Qur'an, or the Kalimah Tayyibah or the Ayatul-Kursi. When the status of such a gathering is of therapy and cure, then the question of Bid'at completely falls away. Similarly the Khatam of Bukhari Shareef is also done as a cure and remedy, and not as a form of Ibaadat.

Many Mashaaikh, Ulama'a and pious people have read the Bukhari Shareef for the fulfillment of their wants and needs; and for the removal of hardships and difficulties; and for the removal of worries and fears; and for the removal of calamities and disasters, and in times of wants and necessities, through the Khatam and recitation of Bukhari Shareef these pious people obtained success and found this practice to be extremely propitious. This is a fact which has reached a very high degree of fame and credibility in the eyes of scholars of Hadith. (Fataawa Mahmoodiyah, page 144, vol. 12)

Similarly the recitation in gatherings of Qur'an Shareef, 41 times Surah Yaseen Shareef or 125 000 a certain verse of the Qur'an is allowed as **Hadrat Moulana Mufti Rashid Ahmed Ludhanvi (R.A.) has ruled: - Because the intention of such practices is therapy and cure, and not Ibaadat and reward; therefore in spite of non evidence of it in the Hadith it will not be harmful to do so.**
(Ahsanul-Fataawa, page 36, vol. 1)

Gatherings for Recitation of Qur'an and Zikr for the Isaale-Sawaab of the Dead:

These types of gatherings are divided into two kinds: -

a) The first types are those gathering which are convened after the burial of the deceased person around and with the family of the deceased. Whenever and at whatever time they are convened, all such gatherings are unanimously without exception totally impermissible and Makrooh. Hadrat Jabir bin Abdullah (R.A.) reports on the authority of ibne-Maajah, page 117: -

"We the Noble Companions (R.A.) regarded gathering at the home of the deceased and preparing food there lamentation (Nauha)."

Hadrat Moulana Khalil Ahmad Sahaaranpuri (R.A.), Muhaajire-Madinah gives the following explanation of the above Hadith: -

“The word “IJTIMAA” used in this Hadith is used in a general and broad sense so it includes /covers all types of gatherings at the home of the deceased; whether it be for offering condolence to the bereaved family for a second time; or for recitation of Qur’an, now to limit and restrict something that is general and broad according to ones own opinion is Haraam (unlawful). (Baraaheene-Qaati’ah, p 104)

The Author of Safrus-Sa’aadah explains: - It was not the habit of the Noble Companions (R.A.) to gather for the deceased (at his home), and to read Qur’an or to make any kind of Khatams at the graveside or anywhere else, because all these types of gatherings were Bid’at.”

(Translated from Persian to English)

Hadrat Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehelvi (R.A.) says the same thing. (Raahe-Sunnah, page 266)

Hadrat Moulana Khalil Ahmad Sahaaranpuri (R.A.) explains about the view expressed by the Author of Safrus-Sa’aadah, that it was not the habit of the Sahabah (R.A.) to gather and collect for the Mayyit; when these Sahabah (R.A.) who were hungry and insatiable for all kinds of goodness /reward; and had the zeal and enthusiasm for every kind of good deed. When they left this type of action out thinking it to be bad, then for another person to carry out such an act, will it then not be a Bid’at. (Baraaheene-Qaati’ah, p 106)

One more thing that needs clarification is whenever a group of people gather by the family of the Mayyit to read Qur’an, is every such gathering Makrooh or not?

Hadrat Moulana Khalil Ahmed Sahaaranpuri (R.A.) gives the following answer to this question: - “It has been narrated in Sharah Minhaaj: “IJTIMAA” at the grave of the deceased on the third day; and the distribution of flowers and fragrance at the graveside or elsewhere; the feeding of people on specific days like the 3rd day, 5th day, 29th day and 40th day; and feeding of people on the 6th month or on the first anniversary; is forbidden and Bid’at.”

The actual basis of this ruling is the Hadith of Jabir (R.A.) in which all types' gatherings at the home of the deceased are banned, and in it no fixed time, day or place has been specified, therefore all types of gatherings at the home of the decease for whatever purpose will be Bid'at. This prohibition will be applied by the people of every country according to the customs prevailing there. The Author of Sharhe-Minhaaj mentions "The gathering of the people at the Qabr on the Third day" etc. in other countries people gather at the home of the deceased, or gather for the deceased, or at the home of some family member on the 3rd, or 7th or 40th day etc. at any rate all types of gatherings whether it be on the 3rd or any other day, at home or at the grave is prohibited by the Hadith of Jabir (R.A).

(Baraaheene-Qaati'ah, page 129)

One objection:

There is a Hadith in Mishkaat Shareef in which it has been narrated by Hadrat Jabir bin Abdullah (R.A.) that when Sa'ad bin Muadh (R.A.) was buried, then Rasulullah (S.A.W.) stood by the graveyard and recited loudly SubhanAllaah, for a long time, we did the same.

Then Rasulullah (S.A.W.) read loudly Allaahu Akbar for a long time and we did the same. Then Rasulullah (S.A.W.) was asked as to why he had done so. He replied: "The grave had pressed him hard so through recitation of the Tasbeeh and Takbir the grave became spacious for him on all sides.

Some people take this Hadith as proof for gathering at the Qabr of the deceased, they say that although Rasulullah (S.A.W.) had not recited Qur'an at the graveside, but he had at least made Zikr with a group of people for the Mayyit. So one example is sufficient to prove its permissibility according to the Jurists.

The Answer:

The conclusion and summary of the answer to the above objection which Hadrat Moulana Sahaaranpuri (R.A.) has given on Page 107 of Baraaheene-Qaati'ah is as follows: -

1) The gatherings which are prohibited and are Bid'at are those gatherings which are assembled after the Burial of the deceased for a second time for the recitation of Qur'an, whether assemblies take place at the deceased home or elsewhere; whereas the gathering mentioned in the above Hadith was a gathering for the burial of the deceased which is Fardhe-Kifaayah.

2) The Loud Zikr which Rasulullah (S.A.W.) made with the group of Companions (R.A.) was not for the purpose of duaa or Ithaale-Sawaab.

3) The gatherings which takes place at the time of Burial are not gatherings called for making Zikr of Allaah, but are gatherings solely for the purpose of Burial which is a meritorious permissible act.

4) Rasulullah (S.A.W.)'s purpose was not recitation of Zikr, but when Rasulullah (S.A.W.) saw the difficulty of the deceased Sahabah (R.A.) in the grave, he started reciting Tasbeeh and Takbir in order to remove his difficulty and the Noble Companions followed his example.

b) The second type are those gatherings which take place for the deceased at some other place or in another country etc.
Some Ulama'a say that they are permissible and some say that they are not permissible.

i) Those who say that they are not permissible cite and advance the following proof: - It was not the practice of Rasulullah (S.A.W.) and the Noble Companions (R.A.). During the Battle of Muttah when Nabi (S.A.W.) heard about the Sahabah and martyrdom of Zaid bin Haaritha (R.A.), Abdullah bin Rawahah (R.A.), and

Ja'far Tayyaar (R.A.), Nabi (S.A.W.) remained seated in the Masjid sad and depressed, with a group of Sahabah (R.A.), but Nabi (S.A.W.) did not gather or call the people for reciting Qur'an and Zikr for the Isaale-Sawaab of these Sahabah. Nor did he do this when he received information of the martyrdom of the Shuhadaa of Bire-Ma'unah. Nor did Nabi (S.A.W.) and the Noble Companions (R.A.) gather at any time or on the occasion of the death of anyone or after death of anyone for the recitation of Qur'an or Zikr for the Isaale-Sawaab of that dead person.

ii) Those who say that it is permissible cite and advance the following proof: - Hadrat Allaamah Aini (R.A.), in the commentary of Hedaayah in the Chapter "Making Hajj on behalf of another" says: - Without any doubt, Muslims have at all times and periods, have always gathered to recite Qur'an for the Isaale-Sawaab of their dead relatives and passed on the reward of these recitations to their dead relatives. This is the unanimous and united practice of all the righteous and true Jurists of all the Madh Habs, whether they be Maliki, Shafee or others; and no one has objected to this practice. We have mentioned this just to clarify the actual ruling of the Jurists.

Otherwise our argument and claim is that whenever people will fall into error and deviation through the forming of such types of gathering as mentioned above, then to stop people from falling into error and deviation, even optional permissible Sunnah acts also have to be obligatorily left out.

The Summary and conclusion of the above therefore is: -

i) Gatherings for the Isaale-Sawaab at the deceased home, at all times are unanimously Makrooh and Impermissible.

ii) Any gathering for the Isaale-Sawaab of the deceased at another place by invitation or call too is unanimously impermissible.

iii) Any gathering for the Isaale-Sawaab of the deceased, if it is not by invitation and call, nor is it at his home but at another place, according to some Ulama'a is permissible and according to others is not permissible. But if through such types of gatherings people will fall into error and deviation, and chance their beliefs, then it would become necessary to abstain from such gatherings as well.

(And Allaah knows Best.)
Translation Edited by :
Mufti Afzal Hoosen Elias
1424/ 2003